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To/Attn: Examiner F. Thompson, Jr., Group Art Unit 2765
Asst Commissioner for Patents, US Patent and Trademark Office

From: Thomas C. Blodgett

Re: In re Application of: Oliver et al.
Application No.: 09/036,236
Filing Date: 6 March, 1998
For: SYSTEM FOR MANAGEMENT OF TRANSACTIONS ON NETWORK
Our Ref: 005-905-300

Message: Examiner Thompson:
Attached is a supplement to the response filed 29 September 1999 in the above case.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas C. Blodgett
Thomas C. Blodgett
Agent for Applicant

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Revision date: 3/16/95

Inventor Name: Oliver et al.
Serial No. 09/036,236

In the Abstract:

Kindly delete the original abstract and substitute the abstract provided as Appendix B.

In the Claims:

Please amend original claims 1-7, 12-16, 18, 22, and 31-34 as shown in Appendix C, and add new Claims 35-80 as shown in Appendix D.

REMARKS

Citation of Art

A Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement accompanies this Response, including more complete copies of previously cited references in accordance with paragraph 2 of the Examiner's Action.

Drawings

The above amendments to the specification and proposed amendments to drawing FIG. 2 appear to obviate the objections mentioned in paragraph 3 of the Office Action. Formal drawings will be submitted in due course on allowance, complying with the requirement of the Draftsman's form PTO-948.

Abstract

A new abstract is provided, complying with 37 C.F.R. 1.72 and MPEP 608.01(b).

Claims:

Claims 1-80 remain in the case.

Claims 1-34 are original

Claims 35-80 are copied from U.S. Patent No. 5,815,665 (Tepèr et al.), granted 29 September 1998, less than one (1) year before this submission, in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 135(b).

Clickshare in the News (mirror)

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multinational corporation and before Josh became the dictator of a small Eastern European nation -- we considered using a micropayment business model.

We reasoned that if each of our millions of readers were willing to plunk down a nickel for every article they read, we'd have the biggest bellies in Fat City. Hell, if a mere 100,000 people a day came through our site (remember, there are supposedly 15 million active Internet users), we'd be making \$25,000 per week. And even we could live on that (though Josh would have to give up his three-hour-per-day habit). So when Clickshare announced last week that micropayments were finally a reality, we asked where to sign.

"Most of the financial mechanisms that people are coming up with are trying to capture people rather than release them," Clickshare marketing director Felix Kramer says with postmodern verve. Clickshare, which has raised \$175.85 since last Friday, "utilizes the interconnectedness of the Web."

Here's how: Netly Publishing would enter into a deal with Clickshare and install its software on our servers. Next we would tell all of our readers that we were going to start charging them \$.10 and up for each article they read on Netly. Clickshare then tracks readers' usage and supplies a record of their "page visits," including session IDs and time stamps, and submits a bill based on that usage from Netly Publishing. Clickshare keeps 20 percent of the tab, 30 percent is kicked back to the company that bills the users and provides the connectivity, and the other half goes back into the Netly coffers (note that if Netly acts as the bill collector/ service provider, at least 70 percent of the total bill goes into our pockets). All the user sees is an aggregate bill at the end of the month.

"I think this is a way that writers can finally end up getting paid for their writing," said Kramer. It's the dawn of a new age -- none too soon if you ask us.

Right now the most lucrative aspect of the Clickshare system is its ability to gather detailed user demographics. Beyond that, Kramer admits that "we're not sure about these models we're implementing. It may change once we gain more experience."

The whole venture depends on Clickshare's ability to achieve step one -- luring The Netly News Networks Publishing Ventures SA and other content providers into using its system. Clickshare essentially has to become the network to become viable. In truth, if you can become the network, you've got it made anyhow. We're not certain that Clickshare is really ready to go head-to-head with Microsoft, but Kramer assures us that he "expects to be talking to a lot of Fortune 500 companies" once Clickshare finds a CEO.

Of course, the operation also depends on the readers' willingness to shell out for the articles they read. To that end, Team Netly has put together a special Consumer Report on navigating the Web with Clickshare. We sent it to our seasoned subjective site appraiser, Steve Baldwin, and after much deliberation, he arrived at a definitive judgment of how much these popular web pages are actually worth -- and why.

But Clickshare couldn't resist including the story's sidebar, but think it's only appropriate that you go to the original story to get the links for the items below -- and that way you can appreciate the original design too.]

Netly Directory Services (\$0.30 per click): Being able to stalk your former co-workers and significant others may be worth something.

Netly Today's Lotto Results (\$0.18 per click): You didn't win again, loser! (there -- I've just saved you \$0.18).

Netly Quake Cheat Pages (\$0.75 per click): Look, you've already spent \$49 on this game -- spend a few more bucks to get through the damned thing.

Netly Internet Underground (\$0.08 per click): The going rate for deep-thinking repurposed journalism (we might shell

<http://www.nlightning.com/clickshare/pubpack/clickclips.html>

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get a quarter for the whole site.)

Playboy (\$0.50 per click): Excellent editorial content.

The Charo Calender (\$0.15 per click): She's added two performing elephants to her act. Wouldn't you pay \$0.15 to know this?

Search Voyeur (\$0.45 per click): Horrifyingly funny. We could watch this for hours and rack up a big bill.

Seducing Your Lover by Sign (\$1.00 per click): Worth at least a buck if it works.

Any Search Engine (\$0.00 per click): Never in a million years would we pay for searching. If these greedy readers start charging, tell them you're going back to the World Wide Web Worm.

The Nerly News (\$1.75 per click): Cutting-edge web journalism (besides, we need to raise funds for Stamper's one-way bus ticket to Comdex.)

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Clickshare Culls Microrevenues: Surfers able to buy content with mini-payments

Excerpts from an article by John Evan Froom in the September 17, 1996 online issue of Interactive Age, published by CMP. Here's where the original of this article can be found.

Fifty-two dollars and sixty cents might not seem like a lot of cash, but to the folks at Clickshare Corp. it is money in the bank.

That microscopic amount -- not enough to buy dinner for four at a posh restaurant -- is the money collected over the weekend by Clickshare's just-launched Internet micropayment system, which enables people to buy individual articles over the Internet for as little as 10, 25 or 50 cents.

Only about a dozen registered buyers conducted online purchases between Friday and Sunday, but Clickshare says that's not the point. It claims the launch of its system marks the first time a technology has been implemented to allow publishers to charge for information on the Internet, as opposed to giving it away gratis.

The launch of Clickshare makes good on a promise. The company announced its plans to introduce a publisher's e-commerce tool more than a year ago. It has steadily advanced its strategy by developing the technology behind its multi-site payment system....

Williamstown, Mass.-based Internet start-up, Clickshare beats to the punch no less than IBM, which is touting its similar Cryptolope technology as the gateway to for-pay information. But it might face an uphill climb in continued competition with Big Blue. Though Cryptolopes are just coming out of the test phase, IBM's Infomarket unit claims it has as many as 40 contracts with publishers to use its technology to sell articles over the Net....

Of course, both Clickshare and Cryptolopes also face an unknown element -- whether consumers will be willing to pay for information delivered over the Net....

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Is Web a field of dreams?

Excerpts from an article by Janet Kornblum published September 16, 1996 in CNet's online News.Com. Here's where the original of this article may still be found.

Clickshare today launched a service that may help answer the most burning questions for Web publishers: If you build it, will they come? And perhaps more important, will they pay for it?

Clickshare has a technology that can charge consumers every time they call up information on the Web. Users register their credit cards with Clickshare, log on, and then can pay for news on a "click-as-you-go" basis....

But it's unclear whether people will pay for information on the Web when they can find it in other ways for free. And Mark Loncar, a partner for marketing technologies with CKS Partners....

Bill Densmore, Clickshare's chairman, summed up his company's strategy this way: "We're the Web's first working micropayment service. Now, publishers can charge for valuable information on the Internet, rather than giving it away."

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Digital News: Ripping Into Newspapers

Excerpts from an article by Reid Goldsborough in the September, 1996 issue of NetGuide. The original of this article can be found by an archival search for Clickshare.

Another option being explored by online publishers is pay-per-click services. With Clickshare, the monitoring system that facilitates such pay-as-you-go services, sites can set rates as low as 10 cents per page. Even if an online publisher doesn't charge for a hit, it could use Clickshare to track usage and provide this information to advertisers, says Bill Densmore.

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Micropayment Venture Pushes Centralized Billing

Excerpts from an article by Bill Roberts in the June 17, 1996 issue of Web Week. Here's where the original of this article can be found.

Look ahead six months. Dozens of Web sites are charging subscription fees, and more are joining them every day. Pay-per-view emerges as the standard way to subsidize content, and surfers pay every time they hit the water.

Now consider this: Would this reality be more palatable if the audience could pay a central billing entity instead of getting a bill from a dozen different marketers?...

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Steve Outing, an Internet publishing consultant and president of Planetary News in Boulder, Colo., said, "Clickshare raises the bar and gives newspapers a lot more options about how to bring in new revenue. Until now the best you could do was a subscription model." ...

Bill Harvey, vice chairman of Next Century Media Inc., a Sausalito, Calif.-based interactive media consulting, measurement and tracking firm, added that "Clickshare starts with the philosophy that you can get some money from the consumer as long as you keep the price per page quite low, 10 cents or a quarter. You have to have a three-legged stool to make money--online shopping, ads and consumer subscriptions. Clickshare seems to understand this better than anyone else. I think they're going to succeed, but it has to be tested." ...

The Monitor expects to test a pay-per-piece model for its voluminous archive, said David Creagh, the Monitor's electronic publishing manager. "We adopted it because we think they have the most sophisticated technology we've seen for raw audience data--who goes where for what," he said. "We're going to need that but don't know how we'll use it." ...

Jonathan Roosevelt, an associate at Battery Ventures in Boston who specializes in Internet ventures, finds the Clickshare model intriguing. "They have a fantastic technology. It really is sophisticated, neat stuff. I'm not sure that they're applying it in the best way," he said. ...

But with all the free content, do Web users want to pay at all? Consultant Outing isn't sure. "The difficult part for magazine publishers and newspapers is figuring out what people are willing to pay even for a few pages," he says. "As people see more of that, it will become more accepted, but initially that will be tough going. Paying for archive access is a no-brainer."

Creagh believes people will pay. Earlier this year the Monitor put up a Bosnia site. When Creagh later asked 2,500 site visitors if and how they'd be willing to pay, more than half were game for a micropayment system like Clickshare.

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Who's doing all this measuring?

Excerpts from an article by Jamie Murphy and Ed Forrest in the May 26, 1996 issue of The New York Times (later Times daily. Here's where the original of this article can be found (if you're a registered subscriber).

A number of companies now are trying to bring some calm to the seeming madness of measuring traffic on World Wide Web sites -- and on the banners advertisers pay to place on those sites -- though each has its own view of how and what to measure. ...

Devising more accurate and efficient methods of a Web site's popularity among Internet users is a battle that's just now beginning. ...

Once a user is registered with Clickshare, for example, he or she can surf from Clickshare site to Clickshare site without having to re-register at each stop. Clickshare registrants can also use their account with the company to see what they owe on any Web purchase. ...

Currently, the Christian Science Monitor, American Reporter, and Studio Briefing use the Clickshare system. ...

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Pay-Per-Click: The Next Great Online Revenue Stream?

Excerpts from an article by Steve Outing in the May 8-9, 1996 online issue of Stop the Presses!, the Newspaper New Media News & Analysis column hosted by Editor and Publisher. Here's where the original of this article can be found:

In recent conference presentations, I've been telling my audiences that the model that makes the most sense for newspapers operating on the Internet right now is to give as much away free as possible, and concentrate on attracting advertisers because they will carry most of the weight in supporting newspaper Web operations in the future. Densmore's pay-per-click strategy actually fits in well with this advice, in that pay-per-click allows a publisher to charge potentially small amounts (microtransactions) for premium content that is worth paying for from the consumer perspective.

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How Java Can Pay the Rent

Excerpts from an article by Robert Hummel on page 42 of the June, 1996 issue of Byte magazine. (This article is not yet online).

Peter Kramer, marketing director at Clickshare (Williamstown, MA), another company that's exploring the field of electronic commerce, sees this as one of the functions of the Web distributor: "People are going to deposit their applets at payware sites on the Web," he explains. "Other people will collect the fees for them and send them a monthly check."

Kramer envisions a billing model for applet use based on data transferred, not on time used. Each download of an applet might cost a few cents or dollars but would allow the use of an applet during an entire session. The alternative, in which the applet might be equipped with a built-in expiration timer, interrupting your application to demand another nickel, is not as likely to occur. "The Internet is a stateless system," Kramer says. "Time as a method of measurement will go away."

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Monitor Monitored by Clickshare

Excerpts from an article by John Evan Froom in the May 7, 1996 online issue of Interactive Age, published by CMP. Here's where the original of this article can be found.

The Christian Science Monitor plans to include 15 years of newspaper archives at its soon-to-debut Web site. The venerable paper also announced it has picked Clickshare Corp. to provide traffic measurement and microtransaction strategies for the site. The Monitor's endorsement is a major boost for Clickshare, which has been one of the least hyped of the Web traffic measurement companies to date.

Monitor electronic publishing manager Dave Creagh said Clickshare will be used to measure repeat visitors to the site. He said the determining factor in selecting Clickshare was the firm's ability to track unique users.

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without requiring on-site registration and password access.

"Clickshare's) technology to track visitors, including time spent per visit, is the most sophisticated we've seen," said Creagh. He added that Clickshare's willingness to work with third-party auditors, such as NetCount and iPro, also factored in the decision. "We feel that Clickshare will soon set the standard for allowing transaction-based pricing on the Internet."

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Christian Science Monitor To Launch Web Site, E-Mail Service

Excerpts from an article by Laurie Peterson in the May 6, 1996 online issue of Media Daily: Internet Information, published by Cowles/SIMBA. Here's where the original of this article can be found.

The Christian Science Monitor will unveil a new Web site in two weeks that features a 15-year searchable archive, 24-hour real time audio newscasts from Monitor radio and a crossword puzzle with two levels of difficulty -- one of which lets you cheat a little.

The Electronic Edition of The Christian Science Monitor at <http://www.csmonitor.com> will be free to users through the summer, according to Dave Creagh, electronic publishing manager. Some areas will require registration. Two pricing models will be tested this fall -- a monthly subscription rate of about \$6 for unlimited access and a transaction-based plan that would charge, say, 10 cents to view a political cartoon. ...

The Web site will employ Clickshare Access and Payment Service software to track usage. The software gives users a "digital calling card" so they can log in once and charge purchases at many Web sites to a single account. It also tracks visits to advertiser-supported pages.

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Clickshare eyes web, sees possible profit in pay-to-use browsing

Excerpts from an article by Pam Derringer in the April 8-9, 1996 issue of Mass High Tech, New England's High Technology newspaper. Here's where the original of this article can be found.

A Massachusetts-based "virtual company" with a handful of employees scattered across the country is betting the practice of paying for information on the Web will become as accepted as the once-preposterous notion of paying to watch TV....

Clickshare's future is bright, despite the rise of companies such as Open Market in Cambridge that are also beginning to form business networks. But Open Market collects user/payer information and stores it in one location, Densmore said. Unlike Open Market, Clickshare's user data will be decentralized among the network's affiliated publishers, with each user giving information to a publisher they trust rather than to a large centralized database with which they have no contact, he said.

Densmore is unfazed by prospective rivals.

"The numbers are so huge now that nobody is competing with anybody," Densmore said. "There is enough

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business for everybody at this stage."

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Web publishing: is fortune really just a click away?

Excerpts from an article by Cynthia Karkowski in the April 16, 1996 issue of Webster -- The Cyberspace Surfer -- online newsletter. Here's where the original of this article can be found (if you're a registered subscriber).

The ability to support microtransactions -- purchases under a dollar -- across the Internet promises to drive the sale of information on the World Wide Web. Publishers and authors will be able to sell their works by the article or chapter, or quotable text for that matter. Suddenly, publication archives will become a new revenue source -- not just supported by Web advertising banners, but supported by user purchases of information. Ten cents here, a dollar there, it all adds up to big revenue gains. Revenue publishers might otherwise never have generated under the traditional subscription or newsstand model.

One secure microtransaction system developed by Clickshare Corp., is being tested this spring. (See WEBster article "Clickshare Begins Trials of Clickshare Access & Payment Service" 04.02.96.) With the exception of the initial user registration which must be conducted offline, the Clickshare Service operates online, verifying users, tracking user purchases and delivering user activity reports to its publishers for billing and collection....

"Clickshare provides another model for supporting the sites," said Felix Kramer, president of Kramer Communications and spokesperson for Clickshare. "Sites will get some revenue by casual clickers."

The Unix-based Clickshare Service is in its initial phase of testing by publishers Studio Briefing and American Reporter. Both publishers are looking for a secure payment system which allows them to sell their wares for under a dollar while still supporting high-priced purchases. Clickshare's flexible pricing model attracted the online daily American Reporter. The American Reporter is marketing dailies in two formats: an all-in-one newsstand price and per-article rate ranging from \$1 to \$30. The Clickshare system can deal with the complexities of such a variable pricing structure with its unlimited pricing levels.

[from the issue's table of contents:]

But will the model catch on? It may all come down to pricing.

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Self-Publishing Opportunities on the Internet

Newshare: a new opportunity for nonfiction writers

Excerpts from an article by Durant Imboden, author of the "Putting the Net to Work" column in the April 1996 issue of Boardwatch magazine. Here's where the original of this article can be found.

News reporters are another group of writers who hope to make money on the Web. Newshare Corporation is an online syndicate that expects to help freelancers and publishers earn revenues from worldwide dissemination of their work.

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"We gather the work of content providers like newspapers, broadcasters and independent writers and artists," the company explains in its recruiting pitch. "Then we make it possible for each of these providers to share their content with their own customers: subscribers and users all under a single system of validation, tracking and payment."

Right now, Newshare's content is being offered free of charge, so it's impossible to guess how successful the concept will be when billing starts in mid-1996. To draw your own conclusions, and to see what kinds of content providers the "Clickshare" service attracts, keep an eye on <http://www.newshare.com>.

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Clickshare adopts pay-as-you-surf plan

Excerpts from an article by Jim Kerstetter appearing in the March 25, 1996 PC Week, published by Ziff-Davis. This article is no longer online.

Clickshare Corp. has developed software that gives World-Wide Web site publishers a way to charge users based on their activity.

The Williamstown, Mass., startup's Access and Payment Service uses a "digital calling card" process in which users establish a line of credit with the site simply by phoning the publisher. Clickshare's Web server authentication is then initiated when a user re-enters a site.

The system keeps track of a user's activity on the site, with each page having its own price. The lowest per-hit rate that Clickshare can afford is about 10 cents, company officials said.

Some users, although pleased by the technology, said they hope the base fee will drop.

"I think the system should be flexible enough to charge pennies," said Joe Shea, editor in chief of the Internet magazine American Reporter, in Hollywood, Calif. Shea is one of two users currently testing Clickshare's Access and Payment Service software.

Clickshare's Access and Payment Service is now available for Digital Equipment Corp.'s Alpha servers running Unix and Intel Corp.-based machines running Unix. Other platforms will follow this year, officials said.

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Clickshare collects for online pubs

Excerpts from an article by Rose Aguilar published March 18, 1996 in CNet News. Here's where the original article *may* still be found.

Technology trials have started for a new Internet payment system from Clickshare that will make it easier to pay for online subscriptions.

Called the Clickshare Access and Payment Service, the technology lets users bill charges from several online content publishers to a single billing account.

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For users, the attraction is that they won't have to use their credit cards for small transactions, nor will they have to give their credit card numbers to multiple vendors to sign up for multiple online publications...

The catch is that the publisher must also have signed up for the Clickshare service. But the company hopes that publishers will be attracted to the service because it will make it easier to track customer billing, count the number of times a user views a given site, and monitor visits to advertiser-supported pages.

Two publishers are participating in the tests: Studio Briefing, a daily entertainment industry newsletter, and American Reporter, an online news daily.

The registration at Clickshare provides users with a single ID and password account and a list of publishers using the service. The system also supports authentication for intranets, officials said.

Clickshare is a privately held spin-off of Newshare Corp.

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Clickshare Internet Publishing Scheme Looks Promising

Excerpts from an article published September 18, 1995 in *Stop The Presses*, published five-days a week by Dave Owing, Planetary News LLC, and owner of the online-news and online-newspaper mailing lists. The column, found at [STP archive](#), is sponsored by *Eduor & Publisher* magazine. Here's where the original of this article may still be found.

The Clickshare system monitors and collects data on where the consumer has visited and purchased information, then sends the data back to the home publisher and the remote publisher. The remote publisher receives his share of the sale, the local publisher keeps a slice in compensation for the referral, and Newshare gets a portion. And the participating publishers receive a detailed accounting of what consumers are reading, which can serve to provide advertisers with a verified account of online viewership.

The Clickshare concept has some wise thinking behind it. President Bill Densmore, a former newspaper publisher, has designed Clickshare as an open system supporting Internet standards. Consumers can use Clickshare with any Web browser software. It makes purchasing data on the Web simple; the consumer gets only one bill no matter where in the world she has purchased information. And a single password works everywhere. Credit card information is not transmitted over the Internet; rather, that data is kept solely by the local publisher. Consumers are kept track of by an alphanumeric ID number that is discernable only by the local publisher.

Clickshare as a concept has a lot going for it. It would allow newspaper publishers worldwide to put price tags on their premium data online -- say, access to their electronic archive -- and easily permit anyone on the Internet to buy it without having to submit a credit card number.

The idealistic vision of Internet publishing commerce is predicated, of course, on Newshare signing up a critical mass of publishers to be part of the Clickshare network. That's going to be its biggest challenge, especially since Newshare is a small company without a proven track record. I, for one, wish them luck.

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Newshare Enters Pay-As-You-Click Market

Excerpts from an article by Jeremy Carl published in Oct. 1995 in *Web Week*, published by Mecklermedia. This article is no longer online at the site; current issues are found at *Web Week*.

Williamstown, MA-based Newshare has begun alpha-testing its new Clickshare pay-per-click system, which is scheduled to debut as a full-fledged service in early 1996.

Other subscription-based programs have appeared on the market in recent months, but Newshare is positioning its product as differing from its competition in terms of its pricing structure. The company will go after low-end subscriptions by enabling individual providers to charge as little as 10 cents per page and up, making transactions that would be impossible or worthless with a credit card economically feasible. Revenues from such sales will be divided among the publisher of the content (royalty), the referring publisher (referral commission), and Newshare, which will take a percentage as a transaction fee (tentatively set at 15 percent).

Newshare President Bill Densmore explained a hypothetical transaction with his system: "Let's say you click on a link from a story about the Boston Red Sox in the San Jose Mercury News. The link takes you to the Boston Globe's Web site, where another story is. Using Clickshare, the San Jose Mercury News, as the referring publisher (the source of the link) would take a certain percentage of the transaction and the Boston Globe (the actual publisher of the article) would also take a percentage." For this system to work, both must be running the Clickshare software.

While the Web has always offered easy navigation between content on different sites, products such as Newshare may make the subscription-based model of Web usage a more common phenomenon. "We're creating a platform for publishers to share users and share content without having to surrender their copyright, without losing physical control of their material," said Densmore.

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Clickshare Promises Publishers a Way to Make the Web Pay

Excerpts from an article published October 3, 1995 in *WEBster*, the online biweekly published by Tabor Media Communications. Here's where the original of this article *may* still be found. For information, see *WEBster*.

Williamstown, Mass. -- Publishers can stop banging their heads against the free content wall, maybe. Late last month, Newshare Corp. announced they had developed the excelsior that will allow Web businesses to sell information by the page.

Called Clickshare, the system is run from the publisher's server and requires no special consumer software. It handles third-party usage tracking and allows users to invoke automatic parental control.

"Much of the publishing world has held back from participating in the Internet because it lacked a way to charge for information and a way to verify viewership to advertisers," said Bill Densmore, Newshare Corp. president and co-founder. "Clickshare presents a solution to both problems. Clickshare addresses the issue of how to obtain revenue from per-query access to content or databases."

And users can have a single billing relationship with a publisher or Internet service provider yet surf the net freely, purchasing words, sounds or pictures from any Clickshare-enabled site without having to constantly re-

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register or recall multiple passwords," Densmore said.

Consumers enter the Clickshare universe by registering with a single, independent publisher (or more if the user desires multiple account relationships). Any publisher with the system might then sell a hypertext "page" of information in response to a user's click for a price of 10 cents or less. A range of higher charges are fully supported, as well, if desired by the publisher. The Clickshare system will then charge the home-base publisher for the remote user the 10 cents and will distribute a portion as a royalty to the selling publisher, a portion as a commission to the referring publisher and will retain a portion as a transaction fee....

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Clickshare

Excerpts from an article published October 9, 1995 by Keith Dawson in his twice weekly column, Tasty Bits from the Technology Front (TBTF). Here's where the original of this article *may* still be found.

Here is an appealing proposal, called Clickshare, from Newshare Corp. of Williamstown, MA (which bills itself as "The Internet's first news broker - age" -- though it seems to me that Clickshare's potential applications extend well beyond news gathering and distribution). I first read about it in *Online Business Today*. Clickshare addresses a number of the outstanding obstacles to online commerce:

- The lack of an economical way to track and bill for small-value transactions across many Net services
- The desire for anonymity in Net-value transactions -- i.e., a virtual equivalent to cash
- Users' disinclination to send credit-card data over the Net
- Users' concerns about divulging personal information to a myriad of suppliers, in order to gain access to the content they offer
- The unwieldy and growing set of authentication/password information that each online user must track as s/he signs up for disparate Net services
- The requirement of advertisers to know, on at least a statistical / demographic basis, who is receiving their messages
- Parents' desire to keep offensive Web content from their children
(<http://www.atria.com/~dawson/tbtf/archive/0031.html>)

The Clickshare system tracks your Web-surfing activities, but anonymously, and accumulates similar data for others throughout the system. This allows advertisers and publishers to access demographic reports of what users are requesting without compromising users' privacy.

Clickshare is not the first proposal of this type but it may be the most comprehensive to date. It combines features of Digicash's ecash (<http://www.digicash.com/ecash/ecash-home.html>), IPro's I/CODE system (<http://www.ipro.com/>), and some of the back-office functions of Open Market (<http://www.openmarket.com/products/ProdDescrTMS.html>). It requires no hardware or software at the user end. And it offers the advantage to the user of entrusting personal information only to one single organization that s/he can freely choose.

<http://www.nlightning.com/clickshare/pubpack/clickclips.html>

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Clickshare in the News (mirror)

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This is the mirror of a page (<http://www.clickshare.com/pubpack/clickclips.html>) last updated 9 December 1996.

Clickshare(sm) enters alpha; "test drives" available

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clickshare

clickshare service corporation

Building a free market for digital information

CLICKSHARE UNIVERSAL-ID, PROFILING AND MICRO-TRANSACTION SYSTEM ENTERS ALPHA; PERSONALIZED "TEST DRIVES" BEGIN

WILIAMSTOWN, Mass., Oct. 23 -- Newshare Corp. begins shipping to selected publishers this week the alpha version of its breakthrough Clickshare(SM) system to track and settle Internet-wide micro-transactions.

Clickshare removes one of the biggest barriers to the evolution of the Internet by giving users universal-ID access to a free market for digital information," said Bill Densmore, Newshare president and cofounder. "Yet the information -- and the user relationship -- remain physically controlled by the publisher."

Clickshare's personal Newshare(sm) topic-profiling and custom-linking facilities are open for public use at <http://www.clickshare.com/twit.html>. Transaction-handling capabilities, and an initial base of Publishing members, will be launched in early 1996.

At that point, publishers will be able to sell each others' information for as little as a dime per click, exchanging royalties and commissions seamlessly," added Densmore. "Internet Service Providers will be able to act as on-ramps into this content universe as well."

Clickshare requires no special software for consumers beyond their Web browser and costs a publisher as little as \$795 to join. Publishers can sell information by subscription or per query to their own users, and set all pricing. Newshare is now soliciting a broader group of "beta" publishers.

"Publishers thinking toward the next century want to maintain a close relationship with their users," says David Oliver, Newshare's managing director-technology and principal Clickshare author. "And this implies authenticating them, profiling their interests and preferences, authenticating and verifying their use of resources, and billing them for charged items. Clickshare does this for publishers and for users in background, not in-your-face."

WHAT IS CLICKSHARE(sm)?

Clickshare is a complete, distributed, user management system which provides the only true third-party validation of web usage. It differentiates "eyeballs" rather than just counting them. It protects personal privacy and the publisher/subscriber relationship.

Clickshare(SM) permits consumers to access information on multiple, unrelated Internet Web servers with a single ID and password. It gives publishers revenues not only from their own information but from the information their users buy elsewhere. And it gives advertisers the best way to measure web traffic by specific member.

Clickshare's versatile architecture is core technology for a worldwide free market for digital communications -- a free information exchange," said Densmore.

http://www.newshare.com/News/alpha_launched.html

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Newshare Corp., is based in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, a region which has spawned several multimedia startups because of its high quality-of-life, accessibility to New York and Boston and good talent pool. Formed in September, 1994, it is privately held.

HOW IT WORKS

Clickshare has two principal components, Oliver says. Clickshare-enhanced Web server software runs on publishers' computers as a primary piece of controlling software or as an adjunct to other UNIX-based server software. It logs user registration, authentication, personalization and micro-transactions.

The second piece of essential software, the Clickshare token-validation service (TVS) server, is run by Newshare Corp. or licensees. It creates and validates authentication tokens, brokers non-personal user preferences among publishers, and maintains "page visit" records from multiple independent sites sortable by anonymous user number, page visited and site ID.

"At no time does Clickshare know a user's name or demographic profile," says Oliver. "Only the user's home base publisher has this information."

Clickshare has been called an example of "wise thinking" (Steve Ouning, Editor & Publisher Interactive, Sept. 18, 1995) and "the excelsior that will allow web businesses to sell information by the page" (WEBster, Oct. 3, 1995).

Each user has a single "home base" at a Publishing Member (likely to be a local or specialty publication with whom they have a continuing relation). Clickshare users register just once with their home base, providing credit-card information by phone, fax, mail or secure Internet connection. At no time do credit-card numbers or other personal information traverse the Clickshare system.

Thereafter, a user begins a Clickshare(sm) session as simply as logging in to the online world in the first place. The user must enter a personal ID and password just once during each session. In response, their home Publishing Member provides them a personalized, updated, jumpoff page of useful links, based on the personal interest-interest profile the user provided at initial registration.

As they browse effortlessly to Clickshare-enabled and other sites, users can be confident that the link between their identity and their tracks does not go beyond their home Publisher. Clickshare provides mechanisms to establish charge limits and receive periodic reports of charges.

The Clickshare-enhanced Web Server -- which is browser independent -- is provided to Member Publishers by Newshare Corp. free under license. Newshare's back-end service network exchanges data with the Internet servers of Clickshare-enabled sites, validating users and tracking all discrete page accesses -- chargeable or free -- across every participating site.

Clickshare tracks content served to users regardless of the location of their "home" Publishing Member. Aggregate micro-charges, settled monthly or more frequently, allocating commissions, royalties and transaction fees, thus form the basis of a system resembling an ATM network.

Clickshare leaves to each Publishing Member the marketing contours of its relationship to its customers. Each Publishing Member is thus free to use its own model for user subscription or per-page rates.

A portion of all fees accumulated by a user for all visited Clickshare-enabled sites is retained by the user's home Publishing Member. This is termed a "referral commission." And Newshare retains a portion for its role in tracking and clearing transactions. At least 50 percent of each transaction goes to the content owner as a royalty.

http://www.newshare.com/News/alpha_launched.html

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MORE THAN IP NUMBERS

Beyond the model of payment for access to information, because it tracks known users (rather than Internet Protocol (IP) numbers), Clickshare may also serve as a third-party circulation/viewership auditing mechanism for the advertising and publishing industry, while leaving to users control of release of demographic and other data, and respecting their desires for privacy.

"This transparent and efficient mechanism makes it economically practical to bill information purchases of as little as a dime and possibly less," says Oliver. "Thus Clickshare provides the platform on which the consumer of the 21st century can freely and conveniently access independently owned information worldwide, paying through existing credit structures."

For more news and information, send email to info@newshare.com or see <http://www.clickshare.com/Clickshare/>.

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NEWSHARE QUICK LINKS TO:

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